Abstract of the Disclosure

An object of the present invention is to provide a map matching method capable of performing a process operation in a high speed. In the map matching method of the present invention, while employing road network data in which road networks are formed in a plurality of hierarchical layers "a", "b", "c", and a road network of an upper-grade hierarchical layer is established by such a road network which is extracted from a road network having a lower-grade hierarchical layer lower than the road network having the upper-grade hierarchical layer, a road network of the uppermost-grade hierarchical layer "a" is matched with a shape vector indicative of a shape of a objective road in a beginning stage; and when such a candidate road which is matched with the shape vector cannot be obtained in the road network of the uppermost-grade hierarchical layer "a", since such a road network having another hierarchical layer "b", or "c" is matched with the shape vector, the objective road is identified. In the most cases, as to a objective road of traffic information and the like, the objective road can be identified by executing a map matching operation with employment of the road network having the uppermost-grade hierarchical layer "a", and the map matching operation can be carried out in a high speed.